

hitting himself on the head as he realized that his hair is on fire. A purported crack addict smoking the drug and defecating on the sidewalk, and then there are films of a homeless man extracting his own teeth with a pair of pliers.

A segment entitled "Bumhunter" parodies television's Crocodile Hunter, with a man in safari clothing binding, gagging and measuring and marking various homeless men on the streets of Las Vegas before releasing them to their national habitat. These sad, pathetic images are described as hilariously shocking. I call it criminal.

They say it is voluntary, since they reward the men with food, clothing, shelter and small change. I charge them of preying on the despair of those without the basic necessities to sustain life or the facilities to cope. Who among us would willingly be filmed extracting our teeth with a pair of pliers? Of course, the film makers are already planning a sequel.

When I read about this video, I was appalled. Not surprisingly, it was promoted on Howard Stern's television show and soon being shipped to people nationally and internationally.

This is not about committee jurisdiction or the geography of the people we represent. It is about our basic humanity. If we cannot act to protect our most vulnerable, what does this say about us all? We need to fix this problem.

I have started with inquiries to the heads of the Las Vegas Federal investigative offices of the FBI, Customs and the U.S. Postal Service. I have asked them specifically to explain what steps they intend to take, and if they decline to open a case, whether it is because they lack resources, they have other priorities, or whether there simply is not a legal action.

I believe that this is already criminal conduct. First of all, in their own press releases, the film makers admit that they are paying homeless actors to commit crimes such as assault and kidnap. They are, therefore, accessories or aiders and abettors. This activity is not protected by the first amendment anymore than the so-called "snuff flick" might be protected pornography. All three of the Federal agencies investigate pornography, and they know the difference.

The FBI should have jurisdiction because of the interstate nature of the business and the possible conspiracy to violate State laws. Customs should have jurisdiction because the material is being distributed internationally, and the postal service should have jurisdiction because the mails are being used to further the distribution.

If these agencies claim they do not have the resources, then perhaps Congress should act to earmark funds, because this is a serious public safety issue. If these agencies claim they have other priorities, then perhaps we should examine the setting of their priorities; and if they claim that there is

no specific law that authorizes them to investigate this activity, then perhaps we should enact one.

A Congress that will push the constitutional limits on fighting pornography and that will appropriately outlaw crush videos that depict the torture of animals should do no less for our fellow human beings. This violence against the homeless is not just a crime against them. It is an assault against us all. We should do all we can to stop this outrage and punish those who would torture, degrade and exploit some of our most vulnerable citizens.

#### HOW BIG SHOULD FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, passing on to my colleagues and the American people a predicament that Congress is now facing related to spending. How big should the Federal Government be, how much should we tax the American citizens in order to accommodate what we think is important and necessary spending now. And one of the problems with the overzealousness of Members of Congress to spend is that we either increase taxes to accommodate that spending or we increase borrowing.

Right now, the debt of the Federal Government is a little over \$6 trillion. We have a law, though, that says that we cannot have a debt that is greater than what is approved by law, passed by the House and the Senate and signed by the President; and that debt limit now is \$5.95 trillion. Yet the Federal debt actually is now \$6.019 trillion.

How does that happen? We are playing political games. There is a loophole that the last administration and this administration claim exists in current law to use surplus civil service retirement funds and pretend that is not borrowing subject to the debt limit. They use those extra dollars coming in from the deductions of Federal employees to increase Federal Government spending.

The ultimate problem still is how much should we spend. When I first ran for Congress in 1992, the percentage of gross domestic product, spent for the Federal budget was just a little bit over 22.2 percent, of GDP. Five years later it was 19.6 percent of GDP. Last year we got it down to about 18.4 percent of GDP. Increased predicted spending for this year is now starting to go up again at 19.9 percent of what we produce in this country.

So the question is how much do we borrow that requires interest and leaves an obligation for future generations? How much do we tax that takes away from workers. We have got a government, we have a Constitution, we have a free enterprise system that motivates. Those that work hard, that try, that learn, that save, that invest,

end up better than those that do not. And what we have been tending to do for the last 40 years is increase taxes for those who succeed and redistribute wealth. So we tax at a higher rate everybody that is willing to take a second job or earn and save and invest, and, we now tax them when they die.

How much do we tax before we start to take away that incentive to save, to work harder, to invest?

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We are having a problem now encouraging small business to take the risk because of high taxes to pay for big government.

I would encourage my colleagues to look at my joint resolution, which is H.J. Res. 99, that provides we keep budget spending a constant percent of GDP, and let the budget increase as the GDP, gross domestic product, increases.

There has to be some limitation. We have proposals for a balanced budget. That is fine and good, but if we decide simply to increase taxes or increase borrowing to accommodate a growing budget, it still leaves a burden on future generations, and it takes away some of that incentive from current workers that are trying to work and save and learn and invest to make their life and their families' lives better.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would say that the overzealousness to spend is what happens in these Chambers, because often Members are better off politically if they come up with new pork barrel projects to take home to their district. They often get in the newspaper and on television if they are willing to start a new social program that spends more of somebody else's money. It is just important that we remember that when we spend money, when we come up with these generous programs, as we approach prescription drugs in Medicare, let us remember that we are taking away from current workers or putting an extra burden on future retirees by increasing the debt load to accommodate what seems at the moment an important spending program. Taxes and debt are high enough. Let us be frugal on spending.

#### FAST TRACK TRADE BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the House will soon consider a motion to go to conference on H.R. 3005, the fast track bill. Normally, the process for beginning a conference is a non-controversial pro forma exercise, but attempts at passage of a special rule make clear that the current process is anything but normal.

The presumptive chairman of the conference has made clear he does not